



MOBINOW

AN INDEPENDENT INITIATIVE BY MOBITRAIL

DIGITAL APPROVAL SYSTEM



Digital Approval System: Managing Approvals and Workflows for Documents

The journey of every new product begins with a problem statement, which may be shared as a formal RFQ. But more often than not, the expression “...for now we are doing this, but can you suggest a better way...” is heard actually after an agenda meeting is over and there are informal exchanges that leading towards the closure.

In one such interaction, we were shared a problem of files moving across offices in multiple cities and no one knowing at the end of the day where things stood. On the surface, it appeared as aspect of document management; but as we understood, it is more in the space of a workflow and approval management for documents.

On a macro level, what appears to be a problem inherent to organizations with multi-location offices or a hub-n-spoke model, it is equally applicable in workflows within an office which has cross-functional and inter-department teams. Tracking of physical files across tables, indexing of notes and annexures added at each stage is a herculean task. Matters only get complicated if signatories are at different physical locations and the physical files are moved between them.

When we further discussed with our partners to understand how each one handled their workflows, there were quite a few workarounds in use. Email based tracking of approvals and the complete trail attached along with the physical documentation was the most common one. The problem with this was that the tracking was inconsistent. If at any point, one member of the chain was not available, there was no track of the delays or provision for an alternative authority stepping in place. A bigger problem was that mail trails were of no use towards an Audit purpose in case an authority had moved out of the system and the mailbox was discontinued.

As the practical problems became clearer, it was also realized that use of email or, project management systems were not designed to being in efficiency and tracking for internal workflows and there is a need for a dedicated system to make a difference.



Did you know?

Approval delays can account for up to 6.37 days of time delay across a 100 day project.
www.projectmanagement.com

What should be expected?

The requirements for such a system have been aimed at taking the approval process into digital domain. It can be defined by expected features such as:

- Document workflows where the complete history of who did what and when is available for audit.
 - Physical document movements are replaced by automated workflow-based document movements. Physical approvals replaced with digital signatures.
 - Accepts a multitude of document types like PDF files, documents, spreadsheets.
 - Workflows which can be defined, refined if desired and extended as per requirements.
 - Priority levels can be assigned
 - Queries and Clarifications can be taken across by every member in the workflow and the resolutions are available to everyone as notes.
 - Referencing to any earlier approvals which may be related to a present document.
- A proper Audit trail is maintained in the system which can be
- directly made available over an Auditor access mechanism.

What can such a system deliver?

- A faster approval processing for documents with no requirement for printed files and dockets to be moving across a table is the biggest advantage of digitization.
- The ability to complete tracking and current status of a document to everyone on the workflow ensures that there are fewer barriers.
- Workflows can be defined in a system as per the process and urgency levels; for instance, a proposal sanction of value INR 10 Cr. can follow one set process and hierarchy, for INR 25 Cr it can be set different.
- The complete chain is aware on what is the status of a document approval by means of notifications and email.
- Documents get organized along with a complete record of the approval process and who said or queried what as a part of due diligence. This can be helpful towards audit purposes.

The biggest opportunity for big companies has come by far in the digitization of internal processes...

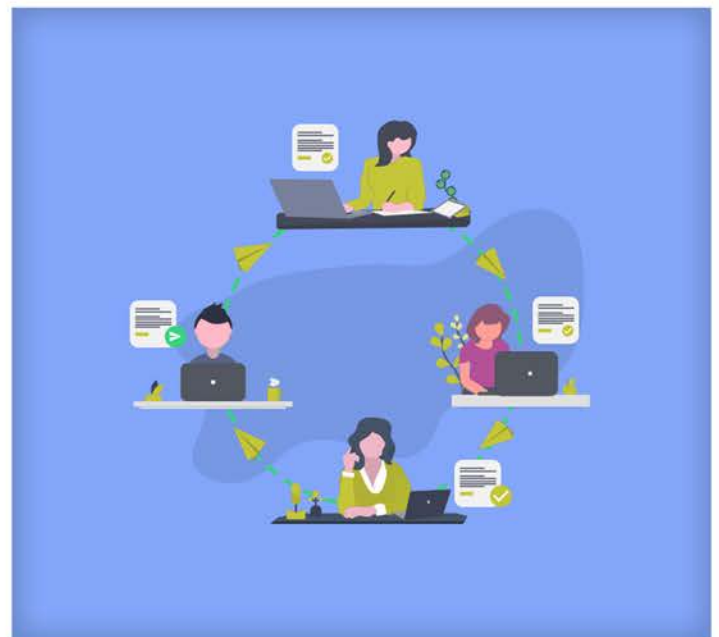
- Jack Welch

Summary Note

It is not uncommon to feel that digitization and automation of an approval process may not be so critical if you have a Document Management System (DMS) in place. While the document organization, sharing of documents within a closed group and digital storage are all offered by a DMS, setting up of a workflow, tracking of actionables and an audit trail is equally important. With elements like eSignatures gaining acceptability, there is far more value in an Approval Management System that can offer a lot more beyond a traditional DMS.

Market Scenario

As much as it may seem as an coming concept with no real urgency to implement, the pace at which companies have gone about digitizing the approval process has been staggering; especially in a day and age where Work-From-Home is setting off as a new norm. Globally, companies like FolderIt, Asertia offer solutions aimed at document workflow management. On local grounds, Docuivity and MobiTrail established a fair market presence with a growth boom around the corner.



WATTPAD

A GREAT TOOL FOR COLLABORATIVE WORK TEAMS

Are you into writing books or do you like to read? Do you prefer books in paperback or an eBook? Prefer Bestsellers or new writers and genres?

A Purist may insist on a paperback, but that apart; most avid readers will regard reading as integral to them and do read almost anything in any format as long as it is within their choice of genre. Whatever the case, there is a key element called the Publisher in connecting the Writers with their Readers. Wattpad is a platform that eliminates the Publisher from the Writer-Reader connection. How does it help - the publisher do have a lot at stake behind every book in terms of cost for publishing and distribution. They thereby also exercise a lot of control in terms of the content and language from a commercial outlook; which can be a barrier between the Writer-Reader relationship. So, it's a nutshell; Wattpad is where the books are a form of User-Generated content which can be consumed directly by readers.

How it works

Wattpad offers a huge opportunity for writers who have the creative genius to script stories in some of the most offbeat and rare genres like Horror, Diverse Lit, Fantasy, Historical Fiction, Paranormal, Science Fiction etc, which may not have a very obvious shelf space under a book shelf. This is also a unique space for Fan-Fiction; a genre where writers can write their own stories with established characters inspired from other published work. So, if you ever have spun a story with both Batman and Superman working together, may be this is the space where you can find some good readership. If you are a budding writer, Wattpad is a place you can test your skills, get feedback and may be get a sense of how far you can gain acceptance. Writers with proven potential also have the possibility of being offered Wattpad Awards based on the followership. In fact, there have been a few stories that have seen commercial success like the Netflix series Kissing Booth which started as a Wattpad story.

And if you like a good read...

What Wattpad has is also the potential to surprise its readers as the stories are not bound by commercial viability. Thereby, one can find the most unconventional twists and turns in a narrative which you may never find on a bookshelf. If your genre interest is a niche, this could be a gold mine of sorts. With content in over 70 languages, there is surely not a dull moment here. Booth which started as a Wattpad story.



What's Hot

If you are a person looking to break the mould in terms of writing or a reader with a taste for the unusual, this is a place for you. The app also has the policy part set in terms of permissible content and copyrights, so no party feels violated.

What's Not

They have all the checks and balances in place, but there can never be absolute policing of user generated content. So, there can be a few cultural issues with the quality or content for some readers.

"To Have" or "Not to Have":

Great to have, but not a Must. If you want to rekindle your writing skills and test them out, please do give it a try



VAPT TOOLS: WHAT ARE THEY AND THEIR OBJECTIVES?



Vulnerability Assessment and Penetration Testing is one of the quintessential needs of every small or big organization. VAPT is used to secure the computers, networks, software, and applications (that are in use) against several threats and insecurities termed as 'vulnerabilities.' VAPT tools are used to conduct these security checks. They apply to particular or several computer systems, software, or networks.

Whom to approach for VAPT tools?

Since everyone cannot conduct VAPT, your organization would require personnel who are well-trained in this aspect. The person should be thorough with the assessments and be deftly acquainted with the various VAPT tools to secure all your high-end security data. Thus, when you are hiring someone for the security tests, make sure that he/she is making the apt use of these tools.

Best VAPT tools that are making a difference

Taking to the security measures before initiating the launch of any computer system is what must be done. Do it to ensure that no attackers find the loopholes in the computers of your organization and go to the extremes of exploiting or hacking them..

- **Netsparker Security Scanner** can be the best choice for web applications and can be acquired from the cloud or for Windows installation.
 - . Proof-based scanning technology
 - . Minimal configuration required
- **Acunetix Web Vulnerability Scanner** is a tool that automatically scans the vulnerability of a website, web apps, network vulnerabilities, etc. It can be accessed as a cloud service as well.
 - . Indicates the line of code detecting the vulnerabilities
 - . Reduces false positives
- **Wireshark** is another popular tool for scanning wired and wireless networks and can conduct offline analysis too. This can be easily installed on Linux, Windows, Unix, and Mac OS.
 - . Helps in network troubleshooting
 - . Gives improved software and communication protocol development
- **Metasploit 6** is an open-source penetration testing framework. The paid Pro-version includes professional support, and you can install it on RHEL, Windows, Windows Server, and Ubuntu.
 - . Has a basic command line interface
 - . Creates the perfect penetration for network testing
- **Aircrack-ng** is a hacker's favorite and a well-known wireless network packet sniffer. However, you can only use it to run on Linux.
 - . Cracks WEP without any authenticated clients
 - . Uses various techniques to crack WEP and WPA/WPA2-PSK keys
- **Intruder** is an automated penetration tool and is a cloud-based vulnerability scanner. Besides, it also monitors the systems continuously.
 - . Checks the configuration and application weaknesses, missing patches
 - . Alarms about impending vulnerabilities

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this newsletter are purely independent opinions. They are more of an industry outlook from MobiTrail and do not endorse or promote any product or service in particular.

BEST VAPT TOOLS THAT ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE

- **w3af** is a web application attack and audit framework that works great when you scan web applications on Linux, Mac OS, Windows, and Free BSD. It is a free and open-source web app scanner.
 - . Creates a framework to secure web applications
 - . Exploits all visible threats and vulnerabilities
- **John the Ripper** is VAPT tool that you can install on Unix, Windows, DOS, BeOS, macOS, and OpenVMS. It is best used as a hash type detector and an open-source password cracker. This tool also allows online browsing of the documentation.
 - . Tests password strength and crack passwords via dictionary attacks.
 - . Also supports cipher types.
- **Nessus** application comes free of cost and as paid versions. You can use it securely on all kinds of operating systems like Free BSD, Windows, Linux, etc. to scan websites, conduct compliance checks, IPs scan, and more.
 - . Discovers known security problems
 - . Provides powerful remote security scanner
- **Burp Suite** is installed explicitly on Linux and is a commercial product. This VAPT tool is the most well-suited for testing weaknesses and loopholes on web applications.
 - . It works by crawling content, intercepting proxy, etc.
 - . Can be used on Windows, Linux, and Mac OS X environment

The more we become reliant on the IT systems, the security risks will be increasing at an alarming rate. The sole cure would be to strengthen the securities on the computer systems and check for the vulnerabilities from time to time. Thus, the VAPT expert would be the best person to tell what would suit your OS or Windows version the most.

May our professional association grow and prosper with the blessings of Goddess Laxmi and Lord Ganesha.

MobiTrail team conveys its warm wishes on this auspicious occasion of Diwali to you and your loved ones.



HAPPY
Diwali